

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for classifying email messages, the method comprising:
 - using a plurality of modules to determine a level of sameness of a particular email message with one or more prior email messages, wherein the level of sameness is derived for the particular email message from a non-zero weighting and combination of the outputs of at least two of the plurality of modules;
 - determining a performance level for each of the modules;
 - comparing the performance levels;
 - adjusting a weighting of at least one module in response to comparing performance levels; and
 - using the level of sameness for the particular email message to classify the particular email message into a category.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising
 - comparing the number of email messages classified in the category with a predetermined number; and
 - if the number of email messages is greater than the predetermined number then classifying the category as a first category type; else
 - classifying the category as a second category type.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the first category type is bulk email.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising

accepting a signal from a user input device to indicate processing of email messages in a category.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the processing includes preventing the email messages in a category from being delivered to a user.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein [[a]] the category is commercial email.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein Bayesian analysis is used.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising
accepting a signal from a user input device to set a parameter; and
using the parameter to adjust a weighting.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a module analyzes word count in an email message.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a module analyzes similarity of text in an email message.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a module analyzes a similarity of sender addresses.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a module analyzes a similarity of network routing.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a module uses a hash of information in an email message.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a message classification in a bulk category includes a determination of whether the number of email messages in a category exceed a predetermined number, the method further comprising submitting email messages in the bulk category to analysis to determine [[a]] the level of commercial text.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising preventing messages with a predetermined level of commercial text from being sent to an intended recipient.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising intercepting the email messages from being sent to an intended recipient; collecting the intercepted messages for a period of time; determining whether the collected messages are bulk messages, and if so, submitting the email messages in the bulk category to analysis to determine a level of commercial text.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising preventing messages with a predetermined level of commercial text from being sent to an intended recipient.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning a lower rating to a module with a low performance level.

19. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning a higher rating to a module with a high performance level.

20. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising preventing a module with a low performance level from being used in a subsequent determination of a level of sameness.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for classifying email messages, the apparatus comprising

a processor for executing instructions included in a machine-readable medium, the machine-readable medium including

one or more instructions for using a plurality of modules to determine a level of sameness of a particular email message with one or more prior email messages, wherein the level of sameness is derived for the particular email message from a non-zero weighting and combination of the outputs of at least two of the plurality of modules;

one or more instructions for determining a performance level for each of the modules;

one or more instructions for comparing performance levels;

one or more instructions for adjusting a weighting of at least one module in response to comparing performance levels; and

one or more instructions for using the level of sameness for the particular email message to classify the particular email message into a category.

22. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium including instructions executable by a processor for classifying email messages, the machine-readable medium including

one or more instructions for using a plurality of modules to determine a level of sameness of a particular email message with one or more prior email messages, wherein the level of sameness is derived for the particular email message from a non-zero weighting and combination of the outputs of at least two of the plurality of modules;

one or more instructions for determining a performance level for each of the modules;

one or more instructions for comparing performance levels;

one or more instructions for adjusting a weighting of at least one module in response to comparing performance levels; and

one or more instructions for using the level of sameness for the particular email message to classify the particular email message into a category.

23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for classifying email messages, the apparatus comprising:

means for using a plurality of modules to determine a level of sameness of a particular email message with one or more prior email messages, wherein the level of sameness is derived for the particular email message from a non-zero weighting and combination of the outputs of at least two of the plurality of modules;

means for determining a performance level for each of the modules;

means for comparing performance levels;

means for adjusting a weighting of at least one module in response to comparing performance levels; and

means for using the level of sameness for the particular email message to classify the particular email message into a category.